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| APPLICATION NO.                 | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|---------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/500,107                      | 06/25/2004  | Remi Valero          | 004900-263          | 7911             |
| 21839                           | 7590        | 09/10/2007           | EXAMINER            |                  |
| BUCHANAN, INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC |             |                      | HANOR, SERENA L     |                  |
| POST OFFICE BOX 1404            |             |                      | ART UNIT            | PAPER NUMBER     |
| ALEXANDRIA, VA 22313-1404       |             |                      | 1709                |                  |
| NOTIFICATION DATE               |             | DELIVERY MODE        |                     |                  |
| 09/10/2007                      |             | ELECTRONIC           |                     |                  |

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

ADIPFDD@bipc.com  
debra.hawkins@bipc.com

|                              |                        |                     |
|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Office Action Summary</b> | <b>Application No.</b> | <b>Applicant(s)</b> |
|                              | 10/500,107             | VALERO ET AL.       |
|                              | <b>Examiner</b>        | <b>Art Unit</b>     |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### **Status**

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**.                            2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### **Disposition of Claims**

- 4) Claim(s) 28/54 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) 28-54 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### **Application Papers**

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### **Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
  1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### **Attachment(s)**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                        | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.                                     |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____. | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
|   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____.                         |

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Election/Restrictions***

1. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

- I. Group (I), claims 28-44, drawn to a process for preparing a low water-uptake precipitated silica.
- II. Group (II), claim 45, drawn to an aqueous silica composition.
- III. Group (III), claim 46, drawn to a precipitated silica having a water-uptake of less than 6%.
- IV. Group (IV), claims 47-48, drawn to a method making use of a precipitated silica as a reinforcing filler in a silicone-based matrix, which has been shaped by extrusion.
- V. Group (V), claims 49-50, drawn to a method making use of a precipitated silica as a reinforcing filler in a matrix based on one or more elastomers, wherein said matrix is transparent or translucent.
- VI. Group (VI), claim 51, drawn to a method using a precipitated silica as a thickening agent within an organic or aqueous medium.
- VII. Group (VII), claim 52, drawn to a method making use of a precipitated silica having as a support in food or cosmetic compositions.
- VIII. Group (VIII), claim 53, drawn to a method making use of a precipitated silica as a filler, a support and/or an excipient in a pharmaceutical composition.
- IX. Group (IX), claim 54, drawn to a pharmaceutical composition comprising a precipitated silica.

2. The inventions listed as Groups I-IX do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons:

The requirement of unity of invention under Rule 13 shall be made in accordance with Annex B of Appendix A1 of the MPEP (Administrative Instructions under the PCT, Section 206, "Unity of Invention"). Unity exists only when there is a technical relationship among those claimed inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding claimed special technical features. The expression "special technical features" shall mean those technical features that define a contribution which each of the claimed inventions, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art" (Rule 13.2). The inventive concepts in Groups II and III are well known in the art, and therefore there is a lack of unity among Groups I and IV-IX, which claim the use of said inventive concepts. Furthermore, the use of said inventive concepts in Groups IV-IX lack unity, as they share no common, novel special technical feature.

The question of unity of invention has been reconsidered retroactively by the examiner in view of the search performed; a review of aqueous silica and precipitated silica and their claimed uses makes it clear that the claimed species (the instantly claimed compounds) are not novel over the prior art (US 5009874 A, US 6184408 B1). Furthermore, these references appear to demonstrate that the claimed species do not define a contribution which each of the inventions, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art. Accordingly, the prior art of the record supports restriction of the claimed subject matter into the groups as mentioned immediately above.

3. A telephone call was made to Mrs. Teresa Rea on Wednesday, July 25, 2007, to request an oral election to the above restriction requirement, but did not result in an election being made.

4. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions or species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions or species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C.103(a) of the other invention.

5. The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims. Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and the product claims are subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be considered for rejoinder.

All claims directed to a nonelected process invention must require all the limitations of an allowable product claim for that process invention to be rejoined.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103 and 112. Until all claims to the elected product are found allowable, an otherwise proper restriction requirement between product claims and process claims may be maintained. Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowable product claim will not be rejoined. See MPEP § 821.04(b). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution to require the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.** Further, note that the prohibition against double patenting rejections of 35 U.S.C. 121 does not apply where the restriction requirement is withdrawn by the examiner before the patent issues. See MPEP § 804.01.

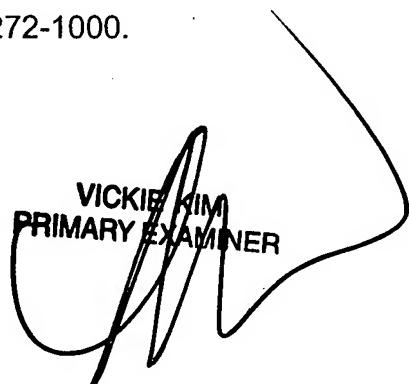
### ***Conclusion***

6. All pending claims are subject to a Restriction Requirement.
7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Serena L. Hanor whose telephone number is (571) 270-3593. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 8:00 AM - 5:30 PM EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vickie Kim can be reached on (571) 272-0579. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

SLH

  
VICKIE KIM  
PRIMARY EXAMINER